



Isle of Style

Focus | Sri Lanka

Trade Event | Green Fashion India
GREENING OF FASHION

Watch Out!
 CATEGORY WOMENSWEAR
RED ROSE

HOSIERY | KNITS
 CATEGORY WATCH | INNERWEAR
Markets have not expanded since GST

COUNTRY WATCH | ETHIOPIA
AFRICA SOURCING & FASHION WEEK
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

SUSTAINABILITY | ETHIOPIA
FASHIONABLE
 FASHIONABLY
 EMPOWERING

CATEGORY SPEAK | FOOTWEAR
SIMONE CASTELLETTI: Graceful Customisation
VOR: By Hand, For Foot

Elegance as Design: Annika Fernando

Launched: 2013
 Website: pr.lk

The Fernandos of Colombo are the first family of design. In 1987, Udayshanth Fernando established Paradise Road as a small store selling handpicked antiques and contemporary designed local handicrafts. Today, the Paradise Road chain includes five retail outlets and PR, the concept store named after the original shop by elder daughter Annika. But then, Annika was an interior designer before she ventured into fashion. PR, the multi-label store, is housed under the same roof as the eponymous gallery of younger sister Saskia. Taken together, they present a confluence of art, design and fashion, and it is difficult to tell where one begins and another ends. PR itself started as a curation from select designers in Sri Lanka and India, and then went on to inspire Annika's own label: Maus.

Some highlights from a conversation:

- ▶ There are countries who have been buying from us (Sri Lanka) for years and we have been exporting the best. It is not so easy for local designers to tap into that production facility to produce for the local market, which I find so sad. I am lucky that I am able to tap in a little bit into sample rooms, etc. I have that access for my own label. I have had the ability to

produce my own swimwear label through Linea Aqua, which is one of the best swimwear manufacturers in the world. But it is not something that one would be able to access easily.

- ▶ When I am dealing with young designers, even for my retail store, one of the biggest problems is their production. I have to return items for simple things like zippers and finishing, which actually should not be an issue because we have the production capability here. But young designers are not able to tap into that. But I don't think that happens only here. I am sure this happens also in India.
- ▶ The Maus Organic line is made with organic cotton and natural dyes at the factory which imports that fabric for me. The Maus Swim line was started in 2016.
- ▶ CFW started its own Swim week in 2015, and then Linea Aqua opened facilities to Sri Lankan labels to create their own collections. I looked at it differently than a lot of other designers. For me, it was to fill up a gap as a retailer. I needed swimwear; so, it was a natural progression for the label to have a swimwear line.
- ▶ The swimwear has one collection every year, with about a dozen styles in each.



Rukshika Fernando

- ▶ I grew up watching my parents grow this business--and retail. I always loved retail. I think it was a love for design and retail, and fashion just happens to be an extension. I am not a huge fan of the word 'fashion'; to me it is clothing. To me, it is about curating beautiful things.
- ▶ Right now, I juggle my interior business, retail business and clothing label in about half a day.